Mr. *Blackall's*

REASONS

For not Replying

TO A

BOOK

Lately Publiſhed,

ENTITULED,

AMYNTOR.

In a LETTER *to a Friend.*

The Second Edition.

LONDON,
Printed for *Walter Kettilby* at the Biſhops-head in St. *Paul's* Church-yard, 1699.

07-1626

Sir,

BY your ſo much urging me to think of Writing ſomewhat by way of Anſwer to *Amyntor*, it ſeems to me that you have not yet read the Book, but only dipt here and there in it, and becauſe you ſaw my Name frequently mentioned, think there muſt needs be ſomething in the Book that bears hard upon me, and which I am concerned in Honor to make ſome Reply to.

I deſire you therefore firſt, to read over the Book very carefully, (if you have not yet done it) and after that, to conſider thoſe Reaſons which I ſhall now give you, why I have no thoughts at preſent of Writing any Anſwer to it; and then I make no doubt but you will be of my Mind, *viz.* That it is altogether needleſs for me, to give either my ſelf, or the World any more trouble about this Matter.

In *Amyntor*, there is first a general Apology for Writing Lives, whether of good or bad Men. But in this part of the Book, from p. 1. to 11. you will see plainly I am not concerned.

The next part of it, from p. 11. to 81. was indeed occasioned by a Passage in my Sermon before the House of Commons; and therefore you with others, may think perhaps it lies on me to reply to it: But when you have read it over, I believe you will be of another Mind, because you will easily perceive that the Author and I are at last, well enough agreed in that Point wherein we seemed most to differ.

The Matter of Fact is this. He had said in the Life of *Milton*, that *many Supposititious Pieces under the Name of Christ and his Apostles, and other great Persons had been Published and Approved*, (by some I suppose he means, not by all) *in the Primitive Times*: And to this Observation, because (by my little Reading) I knew there was much of Truth in it, I made

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no Exception. But he had ſaid moreover, that *he doubted the Spuriouſneſs of ſeveral more ſuch Books was yet undiſcovered, thro' the Remoteneſs of thoſe Times*, &c. And this Paſſage I found fault with, as what proceeding from the Mouth of a Perſon in high Eſteem (as I had heard) with ſome Men for his great Parts and Learning, might give occaſion to them, and to others not ſo well read in Antiquity as they took him to be, to think that ſome of thoſe Books which are received by the whole Chriſtian Church, as Parts of Canonical Scripture, are of very uncertain Authority; (becauſe, as I then ſaid, *I knew of no other Pieces under the Name of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, the Spuriouſneſs whereof had not been diſcovered*) and I charged him with Infidelity, if indeed he did doubt of the Authority of theſe Books; and with Immodeſty, for ſo openly Affronting the holy Religion, Profeſſed and Eſtabliſhed among us, by declaring this his Doubt in Print.

But he ſayes now, that I was miſtaken in

in my Cenſure, becauſe the Books which he meant, (*viz.* In this laſt Paſſage which I excepted againſt, as well as in the former; or elſe all that he Writes from p. 18. to p. 43. is nothing to me, nor to the Purpoſe) are, either ſome Books, the Spuriouſneſs of moſt of which has been diſcovered many hundred Years ago, and which are few of them now extant; a large Catalogue whereof he has given us from p. 20. to p. 42, and it ſeems it was only my fooliſh Miſtake to think that the word (*yet*) when he ſayes the Spuriouſneſs of theſe Books is *yet* undiſcovered, did refer to this preſent Year, whenas indeed it was meant by him to refer to ſome time many Years ſince paſt and gone; or elſe he meant the Books aſcribed to certain Apoſtolick Men; particularly the Epiſtle of *Barnabas*, the Paſtor of *Hermas*, the Epiſtle of *Polycarpus* to the *Philippians*, the firſt Epiſtle of *Clemens Romanus* to the *Corinthians*, and the ſeven Epiſtles of *Ignatius*

And I can't imagine now what you would have me reply to this; for whether he did mean theſe, and only theſe Books in that Paſſage which I excepted againſt, none can certainly tell but himſelf; if therefore he ſayes he did mean only theſe, and not the Books of the New Teſtament, how can I contradict him?

All that I could ſay to this, (if I had a mind to reply to this part of his Book) would be only to give the World the Reaſon that made me think, he meant not theſe only, but likewiſe ſome of the Books of the New Teſtament; which was this; that he having ſpoken before of *Suppoſititious Pieces under the Name of Chriſt and his Apoſtles* as well as of *other great Perſons*; it was very reaſonable to think, that when immediately after, in the ſame Period, he ſpeaks of *ſeveral more ſuch Books*, the Spuriouſneſs of which is not yet diſcovered, he had meant, *ſeveral*, ſome at leaſt, of all the ſorts before mentioned; that is, ſome *under the Name of Chriſt*, and ſome *under the Name of his Apoſtles*, as well

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as ſome *under the Name of other great Perſons.* For how ſhould I know what he meant by *ſuch Books*, but by looking back, and ſeeing what Books he had ſpoken of before? And finding that he had there ſpoken, not only of Books *under the Name of other great Perſons*, but likewiſe *under the Name of Chriſt and his Apoſtles*, what could I underſtand by *ſuch Books*, but ſome Books *under the Name of Chriſt and his Apoſtles*, as well as ſome *under the Name of other great Perſons*? And if he did not mean ſo, or would not have been thought to have meant ſo; he ought, I think, to have diſtinguiſh'd and have made that Paſſage which I excepted againſt, an intire Sentence by its ſelf; and have ſaid plainly, that tho' he thought ſome Books Spurious, which ſome others believed to be Genuine, they were only ſome pieces that had been ſacribed to the other great Men, but not any of thoſe that were received as Pieces of Chriſt or his Apoſtles; and if he had Written his Mind thus clearly, I ſhould

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no more have excepted againſt this Paſſage than I did againſt the former.

But he ſays, *If I had been diſpoſed to deal ingenuouſly with him, I might have ſeen, without the help of the Fathers,* (which he ſuppoſes I know nothing of) *that he did not mean the Books of the New Teſtament, when he mentioned Suppoſititious Pieces under the Name of Chriſt, ſince there is none Aſcribed to him in the whole Bible, nor do we read there, that he ever wrote any thing, except once with his Finger on the Ground, when he acquitted the Woman taken in Adultery.* But I wonder this ſhould be urged by a Man that has ſo very lately written the Life of *John Milton*; for by the ſame Argument I might prove, that *Paradice loſt*, and other late Pieces Aſcribed by this Author, as well as others, to *John Milton*, are none of his, becauſe 'tis certain they were not written by him; for how could he Write when he was blind? And if to this he ſhould anſwer, as I ſuppoſe he would, that they may however, truly and properly enough, be ſaid to be Pieces of

Milton, becauſe they were Dictated, although not Written by himſelf; I ſee no Reaſon why our Saviours Sermon on the Mount, and his ſeveral other Sermons and Diſcourſes which were utter'd and ſpoken by himſelf, tho' Recorded by the Evangeliſts, may not be Aſcribed to him; and be ſaid (in this Author's Phraſe) to be *Pieces under the Name of Chriſt.* So that if this be the only Reaſon I had to think, that when he mentioned Pieces *under the Name of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and other great Men*, he did not mean the Books of the New Teſtament; I think that ſince there are no Pieces now extant, that can in any ſenſe be called *Pieces under the Name of Chriſt and his Apoſtles*, the Spuriouſneſs whereof hath not been diſcovered, except only thoſe which make up the New Teſtament. I had much better Reaſon to believe that he did mean theſe, or ſome of theſe. And in this Opinion I was the more confirmed, becauſe I never (either before the 30th of *January*, or ſince) have met

met with ſo much as one ſingle Perſon that did not underſtand that Paſſage in his Book in the ſame Senſe that I did.

Whether therefore I did miſtake and miſrepreſent his Meaning, is a Queſtion that none but he himſelf, who beſt knew his own Meaning, can decide; but whether I miſtook it (if indeed I did miſtake it) without ſufficient Ground from his own Expreſſion, is another Queſtion, which I could very willingly leave to be decided, by any indifferent Perſons; nay, if I were to chuſe the Judges, and could be well aſſured that they would ſpeak their Minds freely, they ſhould be thoſe very Men that are his great Admirers, who I am perſwaded would all with one Voice ſay that they underſtood him as I did; and that they look upon that Expoſition which he has now given of that Paſſage, as little better than a Retractation of that bold Poſition which they thought he had before advanced, and for the ſake of which, and of other ſuch like impious Inſinuations, in that and other Books, ſaid to be-

Written by the ſame Author, (I fear) it is that they do chiefly admire him.

But whether I did miſunderſtand him, or no, and whether I had good reaſon to underſtand him as *I* did, or not, are private Queſtions, which only he and *I* are concerned in; and *I* think it fooliſh to trouble the reſt of the World about them.

It is ſufficient, that now at laſt we are agreed in the main Queſtion, which is of more general Concern; for (unleſs *I* miſunderſtand him now as much as he ſays *I* did before) he now agrees with me, that the Books of the New Teſtament are Genuine, which was all *I* ever meant to contend for.

He therefore having declared, P. 42. *that in the firſt Member of that Paſſage in* Milton's *Life, by the Spurious Books publiſhed in the Primitive Times under the Name of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and other great Men, he meant ſome of the Books mentioned in his Catalogue,* p. 20. *&c.*

&c. (in which Point *I* did never disagree with him) and *that in the second member of that Passage* (with which only it was that *I* found fault) *by the several more,* [**such Books*] *he meant the supposed Writings of certain Apostolical Men (as they call them)* Barnabas, Hermas, *&c.* About which the Learned World has been much divided, and probably will be, until greater Reason shall appear either wholly to reject them, as altogether Spurious, or wholly to receive them, as in all parts Genuine, than has yet been produced, either on the one side or the other: And he having moreover expresly granted, *that even those seven Pieces,* (as he calls them) *viz. The Epistle to the* Hebrews, *the Epistle of* James, *the second of* Peter, *the second and third of* John, Jude, *and the* Revelation, *which were doubted by some of the Ancients, are (not without convincing Reasons) received by the Moderns*; I have now no further Quarrel with him upon the account of this Passage; we

* P. 43.

P. 57.

we are thus far fully agreed; may he always continue in the good Mind he ſeems now to be in. Only if *I* might be heard by him as a Friend, I would adviſe him, in the next Edition of *Milton*'s Life, either ſo to alter the Expreſſion of that Paſſage which I excepted againſt, that his meaning may not be ſo liable to be miſunderſtood; or elſe to add this Explanation which he now makes of it, in the Margin.

And now this great Difference being thus amicably compoſed; *I* don't ſee what Reaſon *I* (more than any one elſe) have to maintain a Diſpute with him upon any other Account. For whereas *I* charged him with *Confidence* for *aſſerting King* Charles *the Firſt's Book, call'd* Icon Baſilike, *to be ſpurious, without either producing any new Evidence for the Proof of his Aſſertion; or offering one word in Anſwer to thoſe juſt and rational Exceptions, that had been made before to thoſe only Teſtimonies, which he inſiſts upon to prove it a Forgery; or making any*

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Exceptions to thoſe later Evidences that have been produced to prove it Authentick; The matter of Fact he does not deny, and whether the Charge was juſtly grounded on the Matter of Fact, the World will judge.

In this laſt Book indeed, he ſays, *he will make amends for all former Omiſſions*; and, I ſuppoſe, thinks has done it; but whether he has or not, I ſhall likewiſe leave the World to judge; becauſe I do not think it proper for me, to take this Controverſie out of another Man's Hands, who is better prepared, and better able to manage it than my ſelf.

Only, becauſe perhaps that worthy Perſon, (ſaid by him and others to be Mr. *Wagſtaff*,) may not think a formal Reply needful to that little, (that very little indeed) that is ſaid in *Amyntor*, more than had been ſaid before, to prove the Book Suppoſititious; *I* will juſt hint this one thing to you; (and upon Peruſal of all that has been ſaid

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on both ſides, *I* believe you will find it true;) *viz.* that Dr. *Gauden* himſelf is the only Evidence that has yet appeared (and he, not in Perſon, but by his Friends, though in this *I* think no Friends to his Reputation or Memory) to prove himſelf the Author of that Book. For all that Dr. *Walker* ſays, is from Dr. *Gauden*; except only that he ſaw the Book under Dr. *Gauden*'s Hand-writing; (which might be, and yet Dr. *Gauden* the Tranſcriber only, not the Author; according to what is ſaid in Mr. *Le Pla*'s Letter.) And all that Mrs. *Gauden* ſays, whether in the Fragments before publiſhed, or in the larger Narrative printed in *Amyntor*, is, as from her Husband, that is, from Dr. *Gauden* ſtill. Nay, and even all that my Lord *Angleſie* teſtifies under his Hand, as told him by the *Royal Brothers*, (ſuppoſing the *Memorandum* to be my Lords Hand-writing, and that it contains a true Relation of what was told him by them;) and all that

that any other Persons, (though there be Five Hundred of them,) do or shall testifie as by Hear-say from the *Royal Brothers*, is from Dr. *Gauden* still; it plainly appearing by the whole Story, and particularly by Mr. *North*'s Papers, that both King *Charles* the Second, and his Brother did believe, or were thought to believe the Book to be their Fathers, till Dr. *Gauden*, in order to get a good Bishoprick for his good Services, told them otherwise. Dr. *Gauden*'s Testimony being therefore the single Evidence on that side: *I* leave it to you to consider, whether his manifest Interest in affirming this, and his Zeal in pursuing his Interest by this Report of his, being so very evident, they do not render his single Testimony liable to great Suspicion. And *I* leave it to all the World to consider, of what weight or Validity any Man's Testimony can be, especially when he testifies for his own Advantage, in case the Matter of his Testimony be such, that it can't be

credited without allowing, that he (the Witneſs himſelf) has formerly been guilty of a moſt notorious Forgery, and conſequently that he is not a credible Witneſs.

In the Concluſion of *Amyntor* the Author takes Occaſion, from the Offence my Sermon has given him, to repreſent the great inconveniencies that have happened by the Obſervation of the 30*th.* of *January*, and by the Sermons that have been preached upon that Day; and you may expect perhaps that *I* ſhould ſay ſomething to this; but *I* don't think it either needful or convenient; becauſe *I* judge this to be a Matter more proper to be debated in *Parliament* then by private Perſons.

But there is one thing noted in this *Concluſion*, which perhaps you may think lies upon me, more then any one elſe, to defend, *viz.* That ſpeaking of K. *CHARLES* I. in my Sermon, I ſhould ſay, *the beſt of Kings, and the beſt of Men*; which Expreſſion he ſaies ſeveral were

were angry at; eſpecially becauſe I did not except the preſent King; (and he might have added, that 'twas a greater Fault in me than it would been in another, becauſe I Write my ſelf *Chaplain to His Majeſty*) But the Author, I think, does not ſay he himſelf was offended at this Expreſſion; and *I* ſuppoſe thoſe ſeveral, (if indeed there were any that, upon this Account only were angry at it,) were only ſuch, as not only have not been converſant in ancient Authors, but are not yet ſo far read, even in their Teſtament, as to the beginning of St. *Luke*'s Goſpel, where v. 3. he ſtiles *Theophilus*, *moſt excellent*; by which, *I* ſuppoſe few, even of theſe beginners to read, do think that St. *Luke* meant to make a Compariſon between him and other excellent Perſons, and much leſs to prefer *Theophilus* before all other Men, the Holy Apoſtles of our Lord not excepted. And therefore this being ſo manifeſtly an invidious Cavil, *I* think needs

no Anſwer; eſpecially when in the Sermon it ſelf, tho' *I* commended K. *Charles I.* for his Virtues, *I* did allow that he had Faults; But the Faults that were then, and have ſince been charged upon him, being only ſuch as he might be, and I believe was led into by Miſinformation, and a miſtake of the extent of his Power and Prerogative, I ſaid they were only *ſuch as were conſiſtent with Integrity of Mind*; and ſuch Faults as theſe I think can hardly be called *Vices and Immoralities.*

And Now, Sir, *I* hope you are ſatisfied, that *I* have no Reaſon, more than any other Man, to engage my ſelf in a further Controverſie with *J. T.* the Author of *Milton*'s Life; for as to the Reflections which he has in ſeveral places of *Amyntor*, (almoſt in every Page) made upon me; particularly, as to the meanneſs of my Parts, and my great want of Learning; *I* value them not; let the World believe of me as it pleaſes.

pleaſes. Or if *I* was minded to make any Anſwer to theſe parts of his Book, it ſhould be only this; That my Natural Parts are ſuch as God was pleaſed to give me, to which *I* can no more add than to my Stature; however, ſuch as they are, I am contented with them, and thankful for them: *And* that my Learning is as much, as by moderate Study, with ſuch Parts, *I* have been able to attain. *And* to this perhaps, *I* ſhould ſubjoyn a Prayer, in which *I* make no doubt *J. T.* would think himſelf included (as well as he is thought by ſome to be, in the Prayer for *Jews*, *Turks*, *Infidels*, and *Hereticks*) viz. That they who have better Parts, and more Learning, may uſe and improve them to the Glory of him that gave them; and do more good in the World than *I* am able to do.

Theſe Reaſons for my not Writing an Anſwer to *Amyntor*, if they ſatisfie you, you may pleaſe to communicate,

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as you have Opportunity, to any other of my Friends, whom you ſhall find to have the ſame Expectation from me that you had, by doing which, you will oblige,

Sir,

April 21, 1699.

Your moſt Affectionate Friend,
and Humble Servant.

Oſsp. Blackall.

BOOKS *Printed for* Walter Kettilby *at the* Biſhops-head *in St.* Paul's *Church-yard.*

A Sermon Preached before the Honourable Houſe of Commons at St. *Margaret's Weſtminſter, Jan.* 30th. 169$\frac{8}{9}$, by *Offspring Blackall,* Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majeſty.

Great Men's Advantages and Obligations to Religion, Repreſented in a Sermon Preached before the King in the Chappel in St. *James's July* 17, 1698.

A Sermon Preached at the Aſſizes held for the County of *Surry,* at *Kingſton* upon Thames, *March* 30, 1699. Theſe two by *Henry Hesketh,* Rector of *Charlwood,* and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majeſty.

A falſe Faith not Juſtified by Care for the Poor; prov'd in a Sermon Preach'd at St. *Paul's* Church, *Auguſt* 28, 1698.

Myſteries in Religion Vindicated, or the Filiation, Deity and Satisfaction of our Saviour, aſſerted againſt Socinians, and others. with Occaſional Reflections on ſeveral late Pamphlets: Theſe two by *Luke Milbourn* a Presbiter of the Church of *England.*

A Sermon Preached before the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, the Aldermen, and Governours

vernours of the ſeveral Hoſpitals of the City of *London*, at St. *Bridget*'s Church, on *Wedneſday* in *Eaſter* Week, 1698, being one of the Anniverſary *Spittle* Sermons; by *Thomas Lynford*, D. D. and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majeſty.

A Sermon Preached at the Anniverſary Meeting of the Gentlemen Educated at St. *Paul's* School, *Jan.* 25, 169$\frac{8}{9}$, Publiſhed at the Requeſt of the Stewards; by *John Pulleyn* A. M. and Prebendary of St. *Paul's*.

An Anſwer to an Heretical Book, called, *The Naked Goſpel*, which was condemned and ordered to be publickly burnt by the Convocation of the Univerſity of *Oxford*, *Aug.* 19, 1690, with ſome Reflections on Dr. *Bury*'s New Edition of that Book; to which is added a ſhort Hiſtory of Socinianiſm, by *W. Nichols*, D. D.

Reflections upon the Theory of the Earth, occaſioned by a Late Examination of it, in a Letter to a Friend, in Quarto.

Of Truſt in God; or, a Diſcourſe concerning the Duty of caſting our care upon God, in all our Difficulties; together with an Exhortation to Patient Suffering for Righteouſneſs in a Sermon on St. Pet. 3. 14, 15. By Nathan. Spinckes M. A. a Presbyter of the Church of England.